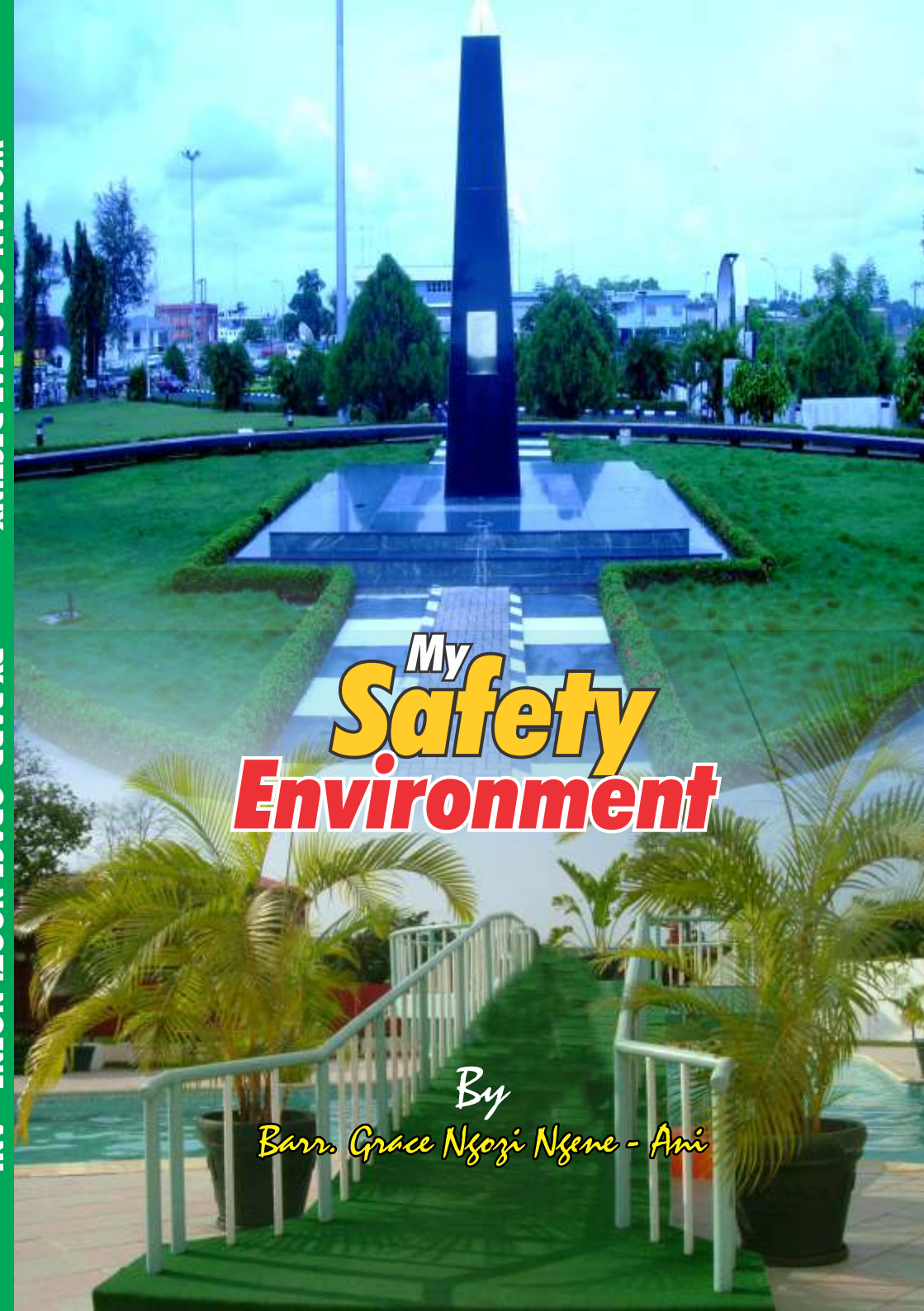




My **Safety** **Environment**

By
Barr. Grace Ngozi Nsene - Ani

***My
Safety
Environment***

by

Barr. Grace Ngozi Ngene-Ani

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Creator of the whole universe and all lovers of good and habitable environment.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Forward.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	6
ENVIRONMENT.....	7
Components of environment.....	10
Types of environment.....	11
Geographical environment.....	11
Man-made environment.....	11
The inner environment.....	12
The outer environment.....	12
CHAPTER TWO: SAFETY AT HOME: 10 COMMON SAFETY HAZARDS AROUND THE HOUSE.....	13
Falls.....	13
Poisoning.....	15
Carbon Monoxide.....	16
Fire Hazards.....	17
Drowning.....	19
Choking.....	20
Sharp Objects.....	20
Stoves.....	22
Dishwashers.....	23
Suffocation.....	24
Home Health Safety Tips for all Ages.....	25
Health Safety Tips for Children.....	25
Keep Areas Safe.....	28
CHAPTER THREE: SAFETY IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.....	36
The Jeanne Clery Act and Campus Crime.....	36
Using Drugs and/or Alcohol.....	43
Risky Sexual Behavior.....	44
Walking on Campus Alone or at Night.....	45
Talk About Effective Mass Shooting Responses.....	51
How to Talk to Young Adults About College Safety.....	52

CHAPTER FOUR	
HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF	
FROM HARMFUL AIR POLLUTANTS.....	53
Air Pollution.....	56

CHAPTER FIVE	
WATER CONTAMINATION.....	62
Safe Drinking Water Act.....	63
Types of Contaminants.....	64
Causes of Contamination.....	66
What Are PFAS Chemicals?.....	69
Health Complications of Water Contamination.....	71
Studies suggest that PFAS exposure can lead to:.....	73
Red Flags That Your Water May Be Contaminated.....	73
It Looks Funny.....	73

CHAPTER SIX	
SAFETY AT WORK PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT.....	78
What is Workplace Safety?.....	78
7 Types of Workplace Hazards and How to Prevent them.....	79
How to Prevent Workplace Harassment.....	89
How to Prevent Workplace Fire Accidents.....	90
How to Manage Workplace Accidents.....	94
Health And Safety in Churches and Places of Worship Cleaning.....	97
Maintenance.....	99
Contractors.....	100
Electrical Safety.....	101
Electrical Equipment.....	102
Fixed Electrical Installation.....	102
Outdoor Electrical Equipment.....	103
Gas Safety.....	104
Carbon Monoxide.....	104
Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG).....	105
Lightning Protection.....	105
Churchyard Maintenance.....	106
Grave Digging.....	106
The aims of a fire risk assessment:.....	111
There are five steps in the risk assessment process:.....	112



FORWARD

Safety is the foundation of good and habitable environments. It is the best quality of any place where man aspires to be at all times.

Every safety condition must be free from death, injury or illness, damage and loss of equipment or property or even damage to the environment. It is important that we obey some general safety rules such as:

1. Always be aware of your surroundings and pay attention to your environment.
2. Trust your instincts and feeling.
3. Stay in well-lit areas with good lightening, avoid dark areas.
4. Avoid isolated or secluded area.
5. Practice safe online behaviour, don't share personal information with strangers
6. Avoid fire and harmful elements.
7. Keep emergency numbers handy such as family members, health or medical services.
8. Be responsible for your own safety by taking precautions
9. Mind what you eat and whom you eat with.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Safety is the state of being "safe", the condition of being protected from harm or other danger. Safety can also refer to the control of recognized hazards in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk.

Safety is the condition of a "steady state" of an organization or place doing what it is supposed to do. "What it is supposed to do" is defined in terms of public codes and standards, associated architectural and engineering designs, corporate vision and mission statements, and operational plans and personnel policies. For any organization, place, or function, large or small, safety is a normative concept. It complies with situation-specific definitions of what is expected and acceptable.

There are two slightly different meanings of safety. For example, home safety may indicate a building's ability to protect against external harm events (such as weather, home invasion, etc.), or may indicate that its internal installations (such as appliances, stairs, etc.) are safe (not dangerous or harmful) for its inhabitants.

ENVIRONMENT

The surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates.

The complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (such as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival

The natural environment or natural world encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally, meaning in this case not artificial. The term is most often applied to the Earth or some parts of Earth. The environment encompasses the interaction of all living species, climate, weather and natural resources that affect human survival and economic activity.[1] The concept of the natural environment can be distinguished as components:

Complete ecological units that function as natural systems without massive civilized human intervention, including all vegetation, microorganisms, soil, rocks, atmosphere, and natural phenomena that occur within their boundaries and their nature.

Universal natural resources and physical phenomena that lack clear-cut boundaries, such as air, water, and climate, as well as energy, radiation, electric charge, and magnetism, not originating from civilized human

actions.

In contrast to the natural environment is the built environment. Built environments are where humans have fundamentally transformed landscapes such as urban settings and agricultural land conversion, the natural environment is greatly changed into a simplified human environment. Even acts which seem less extreme, such as building a mud hut or a photovoltaic system in the desert, the modified environment becomes an artificial one. Though many animals build things to provide a better environment for themselves, they are not human, hence beaver dams, and the works of mound-building termites, are thought of as natural.

People cannot find absolutely natural environments on Earth, and naturalness usually varies in a continuum, from 100% natural in one extreme to 0% natural in the other. The massive environmental changes of humanity in the Anthropocene have fundamentally effected all natural environments: including from climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution from plastic and other chemicals in the air and water. More precisely, we can consider the different aspects or components of an environment, and see that their degree of naturalness is not uniform.[2] If, for instance, in an agricultural field, the mineralogic composition and the structure of its soil are similar to those of an undisturbed forest soil, but

the structure is quite different.

Natural environment is often used as a synonym. In ecology, the term habitat summarises the array of resources, physical and biotic factors that are present in an area, such as to support the survival and reproduction of a particular species. A species habitat can be seen as the physical manifestation of its ecological niche. Thus "habitat" is a species-specific term, fundamentally different from concepts such as environment or vegetation assemblages, for which the term "habitat-type" is more appropriate for habitat.

It is not easy to make a proper classification of the environment, looking at the diversity of the world in which we live. But there are two commonly known and accepted types of environment – natural or geographical environment, and man-made environment. Before discussing them, let's have a look at what the environment is.

In simple words, the environment is the surroundings in which we live – it includes both the biotic and abiotic factors around us. We live in an environment, which may be a natural, social, or built environment. These are the surrounding conditions in which humans, plants, and animals live. Every individual existing in the environment has an impact on it because the environment also influences an individual's behavior.

Thus, it can be clearly stated that individuals and the environment are related and are complementary to each other. The existence of the environment is significant because not only human life but any living being cannot survive without it. It provides natural beauty, maintains the balance of life, supports the food chain, and benefits living lives and their various activities.

The article answers the questions like what is the environment. It also discusses the different types of environments.

Components of environment

The atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere make up the majority of the environment. However, it may be separated into two categories named, microenvironments and macro environments. The immediate local surroundings of an organism are known as the microenvironment whereas all the components including the biotic and abiotic factors make up the macro environment of an organism. The biotic component constitutes all the living things of environments, like microbe population, plants, and animals. Abiotic factors include temperature, light, rainfall, soil, minerals. It is sometimes referred to as the physical environment. It is made up of three layers: atmosphere, lithosphere, and hydrosphere.

Types of environment

The classification of the environment broadly divides it into two categories – geographical and manmade environment, both the subsets are described below in the article.

Geographical environment

Geographical environment is the terrestrial environment that is a creation of complex natural and environmental conditions. Although it arose independently of humankind, it is the complement of direct interaction between nature and human society. The geographical environment revolves around the subjects of climatology, geology, biogeography, etc. They are direct aspects of how human society conceptualizes the geography of the earth.

A geographical environment is also called a natural environment as it interacts with nature. The earth's surface, rivers, mountains, deserts, land, water, oceans, volcanoes, etc. come under the natural environment examples.

Man-made environment

Man cannot directly live in the geographical environment, so he creates some of his environmental conditions to adjust to it. This is a man-made or human-made environment, a human creation. A man-made environment is also called a

social environment. It has two types which are described here.

The inner environment

The inner environment is the social environment that endures as long as society cherishes. The inner environment has a profound impact on human lives. The inner environment is often called the 'social heritage' as it is an important factor for humankind to exist, live and arise. It is entirely dependent on human social influence.

The outer environment

The outer environment is the physical environment that man has created on his own with the evolving technology and science. It is the modification of the physical environment that has helped cope with the progress of mankind and the development of the environment. It includes city infrastructures, houses, various amenities provided at the social and individual level, transport and communication, and much more. It can be said that the outer environment changes more rapidly than the inner one because it is in the hand of man and his evolving technology.

In conclusion, we have understood what is an environment. We have also learned about the different classifications of the environment.

CHAPTER TWO

SAFETY AT HOME: 10 COMMON SAFETY HAZARDS AROUND THE HOUSE

The home is supposed to be where you and your family are safe and protected but every year accident and emergency units deal with serious injuries and sometimes fatal accidents that occur in the home. It is not just children and the elderly that can come to harm in the home with things like chemicals and choke hazards. Accidents in the home claim 18,000 lives each year in America alone. It also accounts for 21 million medical visits annually, which costs a staggering \$220 billion a year.

Many of these accidents are preventable and dealing with a serious accident that could have been avoided can lead to a lifetime of guilt.

We have put together this quick guide to alert you to the hazards in your home so that you can keep your family as safe as possible.

1. Falls

Falls are the leading cause of death when it comes to home accidents. They make up a third of all fatalities. The elderly are most affected by this type of accident. Fatalities aside, when an elderly person falls the

associated problems are far more serious. While younger people may also suffer a broken bone, a broken bone is a far more serious problem for an older person in terms of healing.

Hip fractures are a serious problem in particular for those aged 75 and over and can lead to long-term care needs and serious mobility issues. Follow these tips to stay safer.

Minimize The Risk

Staircases: Keep children safe from tumbling down steps by installing safety gates at both the bottom and top of staircases. Keep everyone safe by making sure the lighting is good and the handrails and steps are solid and well maintained. Elderly people with less mobility should consider installing stairlifts or consider moving to a home without stairs to avoid falls.

Bathrooms: Anyone is susceptible to falls in the bathroom due to slippery wet surfaces. Whilst not the most hygienic type of flooring for a bathroom, those at risk of falling should consider having bathroom floors fully carpeted. Showers should have rubber mats to prevent falls from wet surfaces. Have mats or towels placed on the floor when getting out of the bath or shower. The elderly should consider investing in hoists or seats to make showering and bathing safer as well as a water-proof medical alert device.



2. **Poisoning**

The second leading cause of fatalities is poisoning which leads to 5,000 deaths a year in the U.S. This is a particularly heartbreaking statistic as for the most part curious young children are affected by this type of hazard. Prevent your child from serious injury and becoming one of these statistics by following the following safety tips.

Minimize The Risk

Any cleaning products and harmful substances if kept in the kitchen should be stored in cupboards out of the reach of small children in higher cupboards. If they are kept in lower cupboards, make sure you invest in inexpensive childproof locks for these cupboards.

Store paint and pesticides in garages and sheds that are locked and on high shelves away from children.

Monitor children in the kitchen and do not leave them unattended.

Label all unmarked containers and do not store products in food containers.

Have the details of the poison control centre number in your area to hand and have it stored on your mobile phone. In the event of poisoning, you need to act fast.



3. **Carbon Monoxide**

Carbon Monoxide is a silent killer. Unlike gas, it cannot be detected by smell. You can keep your family safe by following these steps:

Minimize The Risk

Ensure that you have carbon monoxide detectors in your home and test them regularly.

Ensure your heaters are checked annually to prevent danger from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Some home security systems have carbon monoxide detection and will alert you early to unsafe levels in your home



4. Fire Hazards

With over 3,000 American lives claimed each year from fire hazards, this is the third biggest killer as far as home accidents are concerned. Follow these steps to avoid fatalities and devastating burns to loved ones as well as damage to your home and belongings.

Minimize the Risks

Install smoke detectors in the kitchen, bedrooms and basement.

Test your alarm monthly and ensure you replace the batteries twice a year.

Consider a home alarm system that detects smoke. This will not just raise an alarm like a usual smoke detector but it will contact the local fire department and help will be on its way. This is particularly useful should a fire render the householders incapable of response due to smoke inhalation.

Be careful when cooking and NEVER leave a pan of oil for deep-frying unattended. If the pan catches fire use a damp tea towel to deal with the flames, never try to put the fire out with water.

Have your electrical wiring tested regularly by a qualified electrician.



At Xmas, a major hazard and devastating tragedy is fires, which can start from faulty Xmas tree lights. Ensure your festivities are not ruined by a fire by switching off all Xmas lights before you go to bed.

Keep matches and lighters away from children.

If you smoke, take care to extinguish all cigarettes carefully.

Never leave a candle burning overnight.

Have a fire safety plan that everyone knows and carefully plan how you will exit the home.



5. **Drowning**

Children aged from one to four years old are at serious risk of drowning. In fact, it is the leading cause of fatalities and injuries in this age group. Children this age can drown in just two inches of water and 800 deaths occur each year in the U.S. alone in this tragic kind of accident. Follow these steps to keep your little ones safe.

Minimize The Risk

Always supervise babies and young children when bathing. If the phone rings at bath time, then leave it. It is not as important as your child's safety. Ring them back when bath time is over!

Keep toilet lids closed.

If you have a swimming pool or pond then it should be in a fenced area. Never leave children in an unsupervised situation when water is about, including paddling pools.

Don't use electrical items in the bathroom.

6. Choking

Choking is a hazard for small children who have a tendency to put small objects in their mouths!

Follow these tips to keep your child safe:

Minimize The Risk

Always watch small children.

Know how to perform first aid on your child should they start to choke, this includes knowing how to perform the Heimlich maneuver on your child if needed.

Make sure your child plays with toys that are age-appropriate and from reputable companies with no possibility of small breaking parts.

Follow safety procedures when putting babies to sleep and ensure there are no choking hazards in the bed.

At mealtimes, cut up food into small pieces for young children. Teach them to chew and swallow and do not give them large hard candy which is easy to choke on.

7. Sharp Objects

We all have plenty of sharp objects around the home that are necessary but in the hands of small children, they can be lethal. Follow these steps to keep your family safe.

Minimize the Risk



Keep kitchen knives and graters away from children in locked drawers.

Learn how to use knives safely and efficiently, if you don't know how to chop, slice, and dice without risking your fingers then watch some short videos online.

Store sharp knives with shields to cover the blades and take care when washing.

Keep items such as rakes, saws, and lawn mowers, locked away safely in garden sheds. Follow safety procedures and use caution when using garden tools. Remain vigilant to avoid accidents while gardening such as tripping and stumbling and electrical hazards.

8. **Stoves**



Stoves present a significant danger for a variety of reasons. Keep safe by following these tips:

Minimize The Risk

Use the burners at the back if children are about to make it more difficult for children to reach up.

Pan handles should face inwards so that children cannot grab them.

Correct installation is essential to make sure that the stove does not tip over.

9. Dishwashers

Dishwashers are a great timesaving addition to any household but they do pose a danger. Follow these steps to avoid accidents occurring:

Minimize The Risk

Ensure that, when you place knives and forks in the dishwasher, blades and prongs are facing downwards to avoid cuts.

Unload the dishwasher after use so that small children are at minimal risk of getting their hands on sharp objects or wash them separately.

Never leave the dishwasher preloaded with detergent.

Dishwashers work by washing your dishes at high temperatures. Make sure that the dishwasher is securely latched so it cannot be opened mid-cycle,

which could cause burns from steam and hot water.

10. **Suffocation**

Toddlers and young children are at risk of suffocation in your home. Follow these simple steps to avoid accidents and potential fatalities.



Minimize The Risk

Keep trash bags away from children and other bags that are a hazard.

Keep strings, cords, and ropes out of the reach of children. In particular, pay attention to curtains that have cords and make sure cots and beds are not near this strangling hazard.

HOME HEALTH SAFETY TIPS FOR ALL AGES

We all want to be happy, healthy, and safe. From new-born infants to the elderly there are lots of ways you can protect yourself and your family from diseases and accidents. At home, there are many hazards that can cause injury and may require long-term care. Likewise, our health and well-being can be affected by hidden dangers like carbon monoxide, electrical faults, and not having non-slip rubber mats in the bathroom. We have put together a short health and safety guide, crammed full of tips and good ideas to ensure you stay healthy and active—whatever your age.

Health Safety Tips for Children



Kids are going to get sick and take tumbles. It is all

part of being a kid and dealing with it is all part of being a parent. But there are plenty of things you can do to keep these incidents minor and to a minimum.

Getting Vaccinations

Infants and young children are highly susceptible to diseases that can prove to be life-threatening. For this reason, there is a recommended schedule for immunization to ensure their health and well-being. You should ensure that your child keeps to the schedule as recommended by your health care professional. The schedule includes shots that will protect your child from diseases such as mumps, measles, and diphtheria.

Going to the Dentist

Parents often wonder when they should first take their child to the dentist. Obviously, babies don't have many teeth and their baby teeth will, of course, fall out early in life so all too often dental care is neglected. It is recommended that your baby visits the dentist before they are 12 months old, but you can wait until your child is two or three years old. The dentist needs to check that the permanent teeth growing under the baby teeth are developing correctly.

You can visit a pediatric dentist if your dentist is not child-friendly. If you wait too long to take your child to a dentist and they have been drinking sugary drinks their first visit could involve fillings and is not the best experience. If you start going to the dentist early, and your child's teeth are in good condition, then this should lead to a lifelong habit of healthy teeth and dental care. It will also help your child to not be fearful of dentists which all too often leads to adults also being fearful of dentists and not accessing dental care when they need it.



Getting an Eye Exam

Your child should have their eyes examined by your family doctor or pediatrician in their first year. It is recommended that children then have eye exams

when they are three to five years and every two years from the ages of five to 18. The ophthalmologist will be looking out for problems such as near and farsightedness and amblyopia, commonly known as lazy eye. These disorders can easily be treated if diagnosed early with eye drops and glasses.

Keep Areas Safe

Children will fall and they are curious so you should take steps to child-proof your home. This includes placing guards at the bottom and top of your staircase and child-proofing cupboards that contain items or substances that could harm your child. It is also vital that your car is fitted with seat belts that are age and size appropriate. Get into a sensible routine when taking an outing and ensure that your children know that the car will not start until all seatbelts are fixed securely.



Healthy Eating

A healthy diet for life starts with young children. Encourage your child to eat fruit and vegetables by arranging them in fun ways such as smiley faces or animals. Get them involved in making simple snacks and choosing new foods to try. You can get them to decorate pizzas with fresh vegetables. Good habits will stay with them for a lifetime and help them to avoid diseases associated with obesity and poor nutrition such as diabetes and heart disease.

Health Safety Tips for Young Adults

As your children become young adults you no longer have the control you had over them as when they were little. Teens are at risk of a whole host of problems that could adversely affect their health into adulthood. Take some steps to minimize the risks.

Drugs and Alcohol

Many teens will experiment with drugs and alcohol, but it could cause a lifetime of misery. Educate your child about the dangers and let them know that this behavior is not acceptable and there are consequences. In particular, you should educate girls about the dangers of accepting drinks from others and the real danger of date rape drugs.

Healthy Eating

Hopefully, with a good education from a young age, your child is eating a healthy diet. Alarming statistics, however, reveal that up to one in ten of college women suffers from an eating disorder of some description. Eating disorders cause serious health damage, misery and can be fatal. Once the routines of eating disorders are established, they are far more difficult to treat.

Take steps to help your teenager by monitoring weight, eating, and exercise habits, as well as their mood. Check out any internet use that may indicate your child is accessing online material that encourages this type of behavior and illness. Talk to your child and get professional help at the earliest stage if you suspect there is an issue. Eating disorders are on the rise in males so teenage boys who are obsessed with the gym and eating regimes should also be observed.

Health Safety Tips for Adults

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is important at any stage of life. Take these steps to stay healthy.

Be Smoke-Free



Many adults took up smoking when they were teenagers or young adults. As we all know, smoking causes premature and often painful deaths. Smokers are at risk of heart disease, cancers, strokes and circulation problems that can lead to amputations. After 20 years of smoking, problems are likely to occur and only get worse.

Do yourself and your family the biggest favor you can by giving up these death sticks. There are various methods you can use from patches to e-cigarettes. All will save you a bundle as well. Seek professional help to give up smoking and get support from others. Set goals and treat yourself with all the money you have saved. Smoking also causes low self-esteem and when you have kicked the habit your sense of achievement will be immense.

Keep Active

It is all too easy to become inactive when you are leading a hectic lifestyle holding down a professional job and looking after a family. It is recommended that to stay healthy an adult should take part in at least two and a half hours of moderate activity a week. Preferably they should team that with over an hour of vigorous activity.

"But when do I have the time for that?" is often the question. You can make time if you think carefully. Change the weekend matinee movie to a day out in the park. Walk the dog. Think of a physical activity you enjoy, join a club, and make new friends. It might be Badminton or Swimming. If you enjoy it and you have friends waiting for you to show up, then motivation should not be a factor.

Healthy Eating

As with exercise, it can be easy to grab snacks and fast food when you have a hectic family-orientated lifestyle. Eating fast food is not just bad for your health and can lead to ongoing health problems it will leave you feeling de-energized to deal with your lifestyle. Weight gain can lead to low self-esteem, as well as setting a bad example for your children. After all, why should they eat healthily if you don't? Lead by example and maintain a healthy diet with lots of fresh

produce, cook regularly, and make time to enjoy family meals.

As with any age group healthy eating is the building blocks of good health. As we age our calorific requirements decrease due to being less active. Elderly people should concentrate on eating lots of fiber and maintaining a good intake of fresh fruit and vegetables. It may be that with certain medications some foods need to be avoided such as grapefruit. If it has become difficult or dangerous to prepare fresh meals daily then consider public or private services that can deliver a fresh meal to your home each and every day



Health Safety Tips for the Elderly

As we become elderly, we once again approach a vulnerable stage in our lives when we are more prone to illness and accidents. Take steps to stay healthy and active for as long as possible.

Prevent Falls

Often, mobility becomes an issue when as we become older. This can lead to falls which can be devastating and difficult to recover from. Taking steps to prevent falls is key to maintaining mobility. If you have had a fall then take the advice of health care professionals and after having a falls risk assessment accept any mobility aids and advice recommended.

For your own peace of mind, if you have had a fall, you should consider a safety bracelet or necklace that will alert emergency services if you fall. Take simple steps such as wearing non-slip shoes and slippers. Consider moving to a home without stairs or install a stair lift. If the phone is ringing don't try to rush to answer, let the answering machine pick it up or carry a cordless phone with you.

Other Steps

CHAPTER THREE

SAFETY IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Sending your child off to college may be one of the most anxiety-provoking things you ever have to do as a parent. It creates an emotional separation that often consists of filling a void, no longer feeling needed, and other challenges associated with giving up control.

However, one additional concern that many parents have deals with the young adult's safety during their freshman year of college, which is usually their first long stint away from home. In USA, Thanks to the Jeanne Clery Act, it makes it easier to know whether this should be a major concern.

The Jeanne Clery Act and Campus Crime

The Jeanne Clery Act is legislation that requires all colleges and universities that receive federal funding to compile and disseminate a public annual security report to students October 1st of each year. According to the Clery Center, this report must contain campus crime statistics for the prior three years, as well as the actions the college or university is taking to improve the safety of its students and staff.

While this is helpful to parents today when determining which academic institutions offer their child the safest campuses, the act was born from tragedy when, in 1986, Jeanne Clery was raped and murdered in her college dorm. She was just 19 years old at the time and her parents, Connie and Howard Clery, were unaware of the dangers that existed on their child's campus.

Deciding that no future parent should suffer the same fate, the Clerys lobbied on Capitol Hill and ultimately helped create the policy known today as the Jeanne Clery Act (the Clery Act for short).

In addition to having this annual reporting requirement, the Clery Act mandates that colleges and universities supply crime data for four specific categories:

Criminal offenses – homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson

Hate crimes – all of the criminal offenses plus simple assault, intimidation, larceny-theft, and damage or vandalism of property

VAWA offenses – VAWA stands for the Violence Against Women Act and includes crimes related to domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking

Disciplinary actions – colleges must also share any arrests or referrals for disciplinary action that arise from weapons law violations, drug abuse violations, or liquor law violations

When reporting, these institutes of higher learning must not only include data about on-campus crimes, but also crimes that occur on any public property within campus boundaries, public property immediately adjacent to campus, and non-campus buildings or property used for educational purposes and frequented by students, whether owned by the college or university itself or an officially recognized student organization.

So, what do the numbers reported under the Clery Act say about colleges or universities nationwide?
Campus-Related Crime Stats Nationwide

According to the 2017 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide: Crime and Victimization Fact Sheets, crimes reported on campuses across the nation have decreased by 35 percent as a whole since 2014. This number includes 11,000 college campuses and represents a total of approximately 78 million students.

It should also be noted that one category of reported crimes has not only increased over this same period of

time, but increased dramatically. In 2005, 5,522 forcible sexual offenses were reported on campuses nationwide. In 2014, that number was 17,441, or more than triple.

Though this may sound extremely grim, it's important to remember that these numbers only represent reported crimes. Therefore, this huge increase doesn't necessarily mean that more sexually-based crimes are being committed nowadays, just that they're being reported more frequently.

In fact, 9 out of 10 colleges report zero rapes per year according to this report. And if a sexual offense were to occur, the risk is highest in the first few months of school—between August and November—according to NBC News, a timeframe that many refer to as “the Red Zone.”

The crimes reported most often on college campuses are burglaries at 22,826 incidents per year. Next are forcible sexual offenses (17,441 incidents), followed by motor vehicle theft (5,059 incidents), aggravated assault (5,059 incidents), robbery (3,399 incidents), and arson (1,024 incidents). There are also a smaller number of non-forcible sexual offenses (169) and murders (43) that occur on campuses as well.

Of these, more than half (56 percent) are reported as occurring on campus, though the report suggests that this number may not be totally accurate since the Clery Act requires that public areas adjacent to campus be included. One in four (28 percent) occurred in residence halls.

While it's great to know these numbers, your next question is likely about safety numbers for the individual campuses on your child's educational radar. How do you find those?

Researching Student Safety at Individual Colleges and Universities

Once your child chooses the school he or she wants to attend, you may be tempted to scour the internet to see if that particular college is on the list of safest schools in the nation, or if crime is so bad on that campus that it made the worst list. However, Campus Safety magazine warns that there are some dangers to taking this route.

The information contained on these lists may technically be accurate, it can also be misleading, according to Campus Safety. This is because many lists don't compare colleges and universities based on size, student population, or other factors that can make the crime statistics appear worse or better than they really are.

Instead, Campus Safety recommends that you do your homework yourself by asking questions directly to the administrators at the school or schools your child wishes to attend. U.S. News & World Report shares that some of the questions you might want to ask include:

What is the college or university doing to create a safer campus?

If there is an on-campus emergency, what systems are in place to communicate this to the students?

Who is responsible for on-campus safety: local police or university security?

If a sexually-based crime occurs on campus, who handles it?

Are students educated about campus safety? If so, how?

If my child moves off campus, does the school still offer any protections?

How big of an issue are drugs and alcohol at the school?

How are violations of school rules (and laws) handled by the school?

What has the school done to better prepare for natural disasters?

Answers to questions like these can help you better understand how safe a specific college or university is,

as well as where campus safety and security fall on its list of priorities.

You can also pull up stats on individual schools on your own and do the comparisons yourself. The U.S. Department of Education offers various online tools that make this process easier. For instance, you can go to their website and pull data for individual schools one by one, or you can select up to four schools and compare them in an easy-to-read chart that uses all of the data provided via the Clery Act.

Should you do the latter, on the actual comparison screen, you can also check a box so it compares based on numbers per 1,000 students. This helps give you more of an apples-to-apples comparison for the schools your child wants to attend.

Behaviors That Can Put College Freshman at Risk

In addition to knowing how many crimes are committed on the campus of your child's school of choice, the other side of the safety equation involves helping your soon-to-be freshman understand that there are certain things he or she can do that can increase the risk of being victimized. Here are a few to consider.

Using Drugs and/or Alcohol

Before you respond by saying that your child has a good head on his or her shoulders so you don't have to worry about drug or alcohol use, research says otherwise. For instance, one study found that many parents are “overoptimistic” and generally underestimate their child's use of marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco.

In fact, 44 percent of college students binge drink (consume five or more drinks in one sitting) and 14-29 percent smoke, according to this study. And research published in the journal *Addictive Behavior* adds that one out of every three (30 percent) report that they've used marijuana prior to college entry. An additional 8.5 percent who had never tried marijuana before end up trying it their freshman year.

One problem associated with drug and alcohol use, with kids this age especially, is that both of these substances impair judgment. This increases the likelihood that they will put themselves in unsafe situations, while also decreasing their ability to respond appropriately if faced with some type of danger.

There's also the concern that your child could drink too much, resulting in alcohol poisoning or worse,

alcohol overdose. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that there is an average of 2,221 alcohol poisoning deaths per year and individuals in the 15 to 24-year-old age range made up 5.1 percent of these deaths (113). Males die almost three times more than females, with 85 versus 28 deaths, respectively.

Risky Sexual Behavior

Research has also found that college students tend to engage in riskier sexual behavior, which includes practicing unsafe sex and having sexual interactions with unknown partners. What causes this type of behavior in these young adults? One 2018 study found that drinking was a huge culprit, especially if the drinking was socially motivated.

Of course, this can create a number of unintended consequences. In a paper published by the University of Missouri-Columbia Department of Psychology, 15 percent of college students have either become pregnant themselves or got someone else pregnant. Another 12 to 25 percent of students have contracted an STD (sexually transmitted disease), with this last number being higher for females than males.

Risky sexual behavior can also put the subjects involved in the position of being victimized sexually or,

at a minimum, of being less able to defend themselves should their partner try to do things they don't want to do.

Walking on Campus Alone or at Night

Another safety concern is walking alone on campus, especially if it's dark out. Unfortunately, many Americans in general don't realize the risks associated with this simple, yet dangerous, behavior.

In November 2017, a Gallup poll found that only 3 in 10 Americans are afraid to walk at night alone within one mile of their residence, a number that signifies a 52-year low. Yet, TIME reports that “most evil deeds are done under cover of darkness,” citing that some studies have connected dimmer lighting with shadier behavior.

Plus, darkness offers the opportunity for criminals to hide more easily, while also making them harder to identify if they do strike.

College-Based Mass shootings

In May 2018, just 21 weeks into the year, CNN reported that 23 school-related shootings resulting in injury and/or death had occurred. Of these, one-third happened on college and university campuses.

Unfortunately, mass shootings have become a reality for students at all stages of the educational journey. Though this makes it hard for parents of any-age student to send their children off to earn an education, it can be particularly difficult if you're hundreds—if not thousands—of miles away and can't be right by their side should something like this happen.

Promoting College Safety With Your Soon-to-be Freshman

Knowing that dangers like these can and do exist on college campuses across the nation, what are some actions you can take to help better prepare your child, increasing his or her safety during their first year of study? There are quite a few.

Teach Them How to not Become an Easy Target

If a criminal were to stand face-to-face with a hard target and an easy target, they'll likely take the easy target every time. Therefore, the harder your child makes it for criminals to victimize him or her, the lower the likelihood that this will occur.

What can your child do to become a harder target? Psychology Today offers a few suggestions:

Be alert. The more aware your child is of his or her surroundings at all times, the less likely someone will be able to sneak up and commit a crime.

Make eye contact. When passing others on campus, make eye contact with them briefly. This lets them know that you've seen them, making you less appealing as a target because you can potentially identify them.

Walk with purpose. Walking with confidence also decreases the likelihood that your child will be a target. NBC News shares that a great way to remember how to do this is to remember the acronym STAAR:

Stride with forceful, confident steps

Tall with shoulders back and chin up

Arms bent naturally and swinging as they walk

Awareness of surroundings

Relaxed, remaining "calm, cool and collected"

Approach businesses instead of strangers. If your child does get lost or need directions, encourage him or her to stop at a business and ask for help versus stopping someone on the street.

Stay in well-lit areas. If your child has to be out after dark, such as when taking night classes, encourage them to stay in areas that are well-lit. The more visible they are, the safer they are.

Keep money and expensive valuables out of sight. If criminals suspect that they can make off with a good haul from your child, that's what they'll want to do. However, if nothing of value is visible, they may just leave your child alone.

Student Caff  adds that, when walking alone, during the day or at night, students should “practice good pedestrian habits.” This includes not being on the phone or listening to loud music so they're not distracted and can more easily hear if someone comes up behind them.

There are also apps your child can download to increase walking safety. Though there are new ones being released daily, two of the best apps for this purpose include Circle of 6 and b Safe. If you have a home security system, check with them to see if they offer any safety apps as well.

For instance, ADT has an ADT Go app where your child's location can be monitored via GPS (global positioning systems) and he or she can check in at various times to ensure that everything is still okay. The ADT Go app also offers an SOS button that when held down will notify ADT that there's an issue, giving them the ability to send emergency responders immediately if the situation warrants it.

Also, encourage your children to trust their instincts. If something feels wrong, it likely is. In other words, don't wait for something bad to happen before action is taken. Do something preventative to help ward off a potential criminal attack, whether that involves heading toward more populated areas or yelling to

draw more attention to the area.

Educate Your Child About the Dangers of Drinking Too Much

Many may argue that “kids will be kids” and say that trying to prevent them from drinking at all is like trying to stop them from breathing. However, there is some value in sharing that alcohol poisoning is a huge risk, especially for underage drinkers, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

For this reason, it helps to know the warning signs that someone—whether themselves or a college friend—has consumed a dangerous amount of alcohol. These signs include:

- Mental confusion or being in a stupor
- Inability to wake up or appearing comatose
- Vomiting or seizures
- Slow breathing (8 breaths per minute or less) or irregular breathing (more than 9 seconds between breaths)
- Low body temperature
- Bluish skin tone or paleness

If any of these exist, it's important to call 911 right away. If help is not provided in time, the person could choke to death on his or her own vomit, the heart

could stop, or seizures could start, all of which could ultimately lead to death.

Encourage Safe Living Practices

Because this will likely be the first time your child is really on his or her own, it's important to discuss and encourage safe living practices. These are things you child can do to reduce the odds of being victimized while in the dorms or in off-campus living areas.

One good practice is to always check in with someone and let them know where they're going and when they'll be back. In the event something bad was to happen to them, this could speed up the response and get help to them more quickly, an action that could potentially save their lives.

Another safe living practice is to keep their dorm room doors closed and locked at all times, preventing anyone from just walking in. It also helps to have a predetermined distress signal that can be initiated without the attacker knowing.

For instance, if someone was in their room and not letting them contact anyone else, they could say that they need to send a text to their roommate or they'll think something is wrong. Then they could send a text that says something like, "Running late, ran into Walter" or whatever is agreed upon as the distress

phrase.

They want to choose a phrase that is easy to remember but also unlikely to happen. For instance, in this case, maybe they don't know a Walter. Either way, upon the recipient receiving it, they'll know that something is amiss and help is necessary.

Talk About Effective Mass Shooting Responses

In many schools today, mass shooter response is practiced much the same way that fire or tornado drills are practiced and many of these same skills can be used in a college classroom the same way they're used in K-12 classrooms. However, there are some additional things your child is going to want to think about once they're on a college campus.

For example, because campuses are usually very open, it isn't out of the question for the shooter to be in a more public setting versus going down a hall, from classroom to classroom. Again, this is where being constantly aware of surroundings can help, as well as trusting intuition if something doesn't feel right.

It's also helpful to know what the college or university's plan is for contacting students should this type of event occur. By knowing how alerts are delivered and what each one means, your child will be

better equipped to respond appropriately should a shooter suddenly appear.

How do you share all of this information in a way that increases the likelihood that your child will actually listen and follow some of your advice?

How to Talk to Young Adults About College Safety

College Parent Central says that the best approach is to have “an open conversation” with your student whereby you talk about the policies that exist on campus, your safety concerns, and his or her actions. This encourages your child to become more safety-minded, while making you feel better at the same time.

Orlando Family Magazine adds that you also want to be proactive by providing “information, education, and a strong dose of reality.” This involves not sheltering them from things that happen on campuses and, in addition to teaching them how to respond while emphasizing safety, “a little scare tactic goes a long way” says the magazine. In other words, talk bluntly about the law and what happens when they disregard it.

These people are particularly afflicted by the kind of air they breathe and the pollution of that air is something they suffer every day. As a conscious human being, it is your duty to ensure that this pollution is reduced for the greater good of our planet. With that in mind, here are some things that you can do to protect yourself from harmful air pollutants.

Protecting Yourself From Harmful Pollutants

Would you knowingly breathe in toxic air? Of course not. Apart from the fact that it would probably smell foul, there are some serious effects it may have on your health that will see your medical bill go up. Toxic air can:

- Irritate your senses

- Put you at a higher risk of asthma

- Predisposes you to a host of respiratory diseases

- Decrease your lung function and capacity

- Increasingly ages your lungs

- Shorten your lifespan

These are all risks associated with breathing in toxins in the air. As things stand today, we are all breathing in an alarming number of toxins in our day to day air, especially those of us who live in urban areas.

The Hidden Dangers In The Air We Breathe.

According to the experts at the World Health Organization (WHO), air pollution is now one of the leading health hazards we face. In fact, it is estimated that this pollution is responsible for up to 7 million premature deaths each year.

“The risks from air pollution are now far greater than previously thought or understood, particularly for heart disease and strokes. Few risks have a greater impact on global health today than air pollution; the evidence signals the need for concerted action to clean up the air we all breathe.” — Dr. Maria Neira, Director of WHO's Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health

The problem is that it is pollution from both outdoor and indoor sources of breathing air that is making the situation worse. While for the most part, there have been great steps taken towards cleaning up the air outside; steps such as:

Shifting to cleaner power generation methods for our vehicles. (less fossil fuel and more electric and green vehicles are being produced)

Clean technologies are being employed to reduce smokestack emissions from our industries.

More homes have greatly improved energy efficiency levels to reduce the amount of power needed to run them.

Low emission fuels and the use of renewable combustion-free power has helped clean up our power generation efforts.

We are exploring better waste management methods to ensure that we recycle as much as possible and reduce the number of landfills on the planet.

While these efforts, if sustained, will eventually clean up the air we breathe outside, it is our sole duty to ensure that the air we breathe while indoors is clean as well. Here are some things we can do to reduce air pollution in our own homes and to ensure that we protect ourselves against air pollution:

Tips For Protecting Yourself Against Air Pollution

Air pollution

Use an App to Keep You Updated On Pollution Levels

There seems to be an app for almost everything we do nowadays. So, it is only befitting that there would be apps to help you protect yourself from one of the leading health hazards on the planet, including indoor air pollution. Here are some apps that could come handy when trying to avoid high levels of air pollution around your area:

City Air: This app warns you when the pollution levels are particularly high. These levels tend to change

with the times during each day and if you can tell when not to go out for that jog or to walk the dog, then you might just be able to keep your exposure to a minimum. The app also gives you tailored advice on how to reduce your emissions as well as exposure.

Plume Air Report: This one tells you the kind of pollution rates going on around you in real-time. It also gives you advice on when it is a good time to do certain activities to minimize your exposure.

Clean Space Air Pollution: This app gives you a complete breakdown of the kind of pollution around you. (both inside and outside)

Of these three apps, Clean Space Air Pollution is more practical for people who are looking to minimize their exposure to indoor air pollution, especially when in their own homes.

Run A Check For The Kind Of Contaminants In Your Home

The problem with the indoor solution is that the levels are often a bit more concentrated than they are outside. This puts you, your family and even your family pet at greater risk of contamination and exposure to toxic fumes.

Although the pollution in your home is easy enough to deal with considering it is an environment you can monitor more closely and control, it is often best to

know what it is that is affecting the indoor air quality first and what kind of pollution it is that is in your home. The different things that cause pollution in your home include:

Poor ventilation

Humidity levels

Other gases such as radon, carbon monoxide, and ground-level ozone, as well as particle pollution

Of all these causes, radon is perhaps the most dangerous to affect the indoor air quality considering the fact that it is a tasteless, colorless, and odorless gas. It is also radioactive! Radon is most dangerous because there is no way for you to detect whether or not there is a high concentration of radon in your home.

Although it is present in almost every home, the concentration levels are usually too low to cause any harm in terms of indoor air pollution. You can hire a professional to run periodic check just to make sure that those levels haven't gone up to a toxic level.
Keep Your Windows Open

There are several reasons why you need to let air circulate freely inside your home every day:

It regulates humidity levels

It cleans up the air inside your home

Minimizes the level of indoor air pollution due to fresh air

Most people, especially those who live in inner-city locations, tend to keep their windows closed for security purposes. To avoid keeping high levels of contamination within your home, make it a habit to open your windows as often as you can—even if it is just for 15 minutes each day.

This will increase air flow and circulation in your home and ensure that you are at least breathing clean air for a huge part of the day.

Invest In Dehumidifiers And Air Purifiers

Because you may not be able to open your windows during winter for fear of letting the warm air out and increasing indoor air pollutants, you should invest in a high-quality dehumidifier and air purification system to ensure clean air.

A good air purification system will ensure that there is no pollen, smoke, or irritants in the air within your home while a dehumidifier will rid the air of excess moisture thus killing mold and ridding your home of harmful bacteria that thrive in moisture and humid conditions.

It is also advisable to nurture some house plants. These will not only brighten up your home, but they will also filter out most of the pollutants within by drawing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen indoors.

Start Drinking Green Tea

This is more of a remedy after the fact that a deterrent to it. Green tea contains high levels of antioxidants that can help counteract the exposure to indoor air pollutants we already have in our homes.

These antioxidants react with the free radicals and toxins found in our polluted air to stop them from doing as much damage. These free radicals and antioxidants cause premature ageing and ruin our skins. In the worst cases, they may be a doorway for cancer. Apart from green tea, you could also eat:

- More vegetables
- More fruits

All these clean up your system every day and prolong the life and integrity of your skin. There are other things that you can do to minimize or reduce your exposure to toxins and free radicals that are found in our polluted air. These include:

- Eating more organic foods
- Walking and exercising more

Using more natural cleaning agents than toxic chemicals

Using a beauty regime that does not encourage indoor pollution

Finding better and more efficient ways to process waste at home

Avoid using air fresheners and candles

Clean your home thoroughly and often

Wash stuffed toys and sheets to remove dust mites

Many of these things will require you to remain vigilant every single day. This is the only way to ensure that you are minimizing your levels of exposure to air pollution. Although we cannot get rid of pollutants entirely, we can at least make sure to keep ourselves safe and protected from the worst of them.

CHAPTER FIVE

WATER CONTAMINATION

Safe drinking water is a critical component of human life, but pollution threatens many of our water supplies. Agriculture is one of the key causes of water pollution. Industrial activities, overflowing sewers and naturally occurring substances can also contaminate our drinking water. Knowing the signs of water contamination will help you take actions that will keep you and your family safe.

When we turn on the tap, we trust that the water coming out of it is safe, but that's not always the case.

Everything from agricultural runoff to lead pipes to byproducts of water decontamination can threaten our water's safety. And the Safe Drinking Water Act that's supposed to protect our drinking water doesn't even look for toxic fluorinated compounds known as PFAS chemicals, even though the contaminants have been linked to cancer and birth defects.

That's why it's important to understand how these types of contamination happen and what you can do to protect your health and the environment.

Safe Drinking Water Act

The federal government regulates and protects our public drinking water via the Safe Drinking Water Act. The law, which was first enacted in 1974, covers water that comes from public sources, such as rivers, lakes, springs and groundwater wells. It does not cover private wells that provide water to fewer than 25 people.

The Environmental Protection Agency sets national standards for drinking water that include maximum legal limits on more than 90 contaminants. The agency also requires water authorities to perform certain tests for contaminants to ensure the standards are achieved. And it dictates how contaminants should be removed.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Safe Drinking Water Act grants the Environmental Protection Agency the authority to set national health standards for drinking water and to set the legal limits on more than 90 contaminants.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency

States can set their own drinking water standards as long as their standards are at least as strict as the EPA's requirements. The EPA and states can also take

enforcement actions against water systems that violate safety standards.

Types of Contaminants

Numerous types of contaminants can threaten drinking water. They include everything from chemicals to pesticides to animal waste to industrial waste injected into the ground. Naturally occurring substances, such as arsenic, radon and fluoride, can also contaminate groundwater.

DID YOU KNOW?

Every day, 2 million tons of sewage and other liquid waste pour into the world's water supply. Contaminated water kills more people every year than all forms of violence, including war.

Source: United Nations

Waterborne pathogens, including bacteria, viruses and parasites, can also contaminate water. Between 2013 and 2014, more than three dozen water-related outbreaks were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These outbreaks resulted in more than 1,000 illnesses, 124 hospitalizations and 13 deaths.

According to the CDC, the leading causes of waterborne disease outbreaks are:

- Giardia
- Legionella
- Norovirus
- Shigella
- Campylobacter
- Copper
- Salmonella
- Hepatitis A
- Cryptosporidium

E. coli and excessive fluoride (tie)

These contaminants can lead to severe illness, including gastrointestinal upset, neurological problems and reproductive issues. They are especially dangerous to the very young and very old and to those with compromised immune systems.

In recent years, there have also been reports of pharmaceutical drugs in the water supply. Fortunately, the concentrations of these drugs are extremely low and unlikely to cause any considerable health effects, according to a 2012 study by the World Health Organization.

Water-related outbreaks between 2013 and 2014 resulted in:



 ConsumerNotice.org

Causes of Contamination

Agricultural runoff is one of the biggest sources of water pollution and industrial agricultural operations are some of the worst offenders. Crop production and livestock both generate significant amounts of waste and runoff that can seep into water supplies.

Runoff from agricultural operations can contaminate water with:

- Animal fecal waste containing bacteria, viruses and other pathogens.
- Antibiotics, hormones, salts and heavy metals excreted by livestock.
- Fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.

Water supplies can also be contaminated through the drinking water disinfection process. Water additives, such as chlorine and chloramines, are used to control the growth of microbes. But when levels are too high, they can cause eye and nose irritation, stomach upset and other problems.

DID YOU KNOW?

Farming consumes about 70 percent of the earth's surface water and is the leading cause of water degradation.

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Water disinfection can also cause the formation of dangerous byproducts, such as bromates, haloacetic acids and trihalomethanes — all of which can increase your risk of cancer. Other byproducts, such as chlorite, can cause anemia and nervous system problems in babies and children.

Even weather can adversely affect water quality. High temperatures and warmer waters can cause harmful algae blooms. Toxic blue-green algae prefer warm, slow-moving water. They're also triggered by excessive levels of nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus.

Other potential sources of water contamination include:

- Industrial activities, such as mining and foundries
- Runoff from soil, air pollution and automobile emissions
- Malfunctioning wastewater treatment systems, such as septic tanks
- Leaking underground storage systems and pipes
- Landfill leakage
- Sewer overflows
- Radiation leaks from nuclear power plants

Water that's not properly treated or that travels through poorly maintained pipes can also pose a health hazard. If your water is acidic, corrosion of copper and lead pipes can occur and contaminate your water.

That's what happened in Flint, Michigan in 2014 when city officials decided to start using the Flint River as an alternative water source until a new water pipeline from Lake Huron was built. The new water was cheaper than the water Flint had previously been pumping in from Detroit. But it wasn't treated with an important anti-corrosive agent to deter lead contamination.

Soon, the city's water turned brown and consumers began complaining that it was causing skin rashes, hair loss and other problems. Because officials failed to treat the corrosive river water, it was leaching lead out of the city's aging pipes and sending it through thousands of taps. Studies later revealed that local children's blood-lead levels had doubled or even tripled in some cases.

What Are PFAS Chemicals?

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, known as PFAS, are also generating a lot of buzz. The manmade chemicals have been used for decades in everything from non-stick pots and pans to stain protectants on carpets, clothing and upholstery. They are also used in firefighting foams.

The hazardous compounds are sometimes referred to as “forever chemicals” because they don't break down in nature or in the body. They've also been linked to a wide variety of health problems, including several types of cancer, birth defects, endocrine and immune system problems, and elevated cholesterol.

While two common PFAS — perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) — have been phased out by United States industry, they are still used internationally and imported into the country.

A recent study by the Environmental Working Group and Northeastern University's Social Science Environmental Health Research Institute pinpointed PFAS contamination at locations in 43 states, including drinking water sites serving approximately 19 million people.

Military sites were among those most affected by the problem. The chemicals likely contaminated the environment and groundwater on military bases when flame-resistant firefighting foam was used during training and emergency response exercises.

Communities near manufacturing sites have also discovered high levels of PFAS contamination of their water supplies.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2016, the EPA issued a non-enforceable lifetime guidance level of 70 parts per trillion for two PFAS (PFOA and PFOS) in drinking water. In Hoosick Falls, New York, some samples detected PFOA levels at 130,000 parts per trillion.

Sources: EPA and Times Union

In 2016, the village of Hoosick Falls, New York discovered high levels of the cancer-causing compounds in its public drinking water supply and

private drinking water wells. According to the EPA, a person's exposure level to PFAS, including PFOA and PFOS, in drinking water should not exceed 70 parts per trillion in a lifetime. In Hoosick Falls, some samples detected PFOA levels at 130,000 parts per trillion.

The state of New York has accused two local companies, Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics and Honeywell International, of causing the pollution. Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics was also implicated in a PFOA drinking water contamination near the company's factory in Merrimack, New Hampshire.

Health Complications of Water Contamination

Contaminated water can cause considerable health problems, ranging from gastrointestinal illnesses to neurological problems to cancer.

In the case of pathogens that cause waterborne disease, the effects are usually noticed rapidly. A person who drinks water containing bacteria or a virus will often develop diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and other acute gastrointestinal symptoms. In severe cases, these symptoms can lead to dehydration and death.

Likewise, ingesting large amounts of copper-contaminated water may cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Extremely high amounts can cause liver and kidney damage and even death.

Ingesting large amounts of copper-contaminated water may cause



Nausea



Vomiting



Diarrhea

But other types of contamination are more insidious.

Signs and symptoms of lead exposure, for instance, typically won't appear until dangerous levels have accumulated in a person's body. The toxic metal can cause lifelong complications. Infants and children exposed to lead may have developmental delays, learning difficulties and behavioral problems. And the health impacts of PFAS and other contaminants can take years to show up.

Studies suggest that PFAS exposure can lead to:

- Fertility problems and hormone suppression
- Pregnancy-induced hypertension and preeclampsia
- Increased cholesterol levels
- Immune system problems
- A disruption of endocrine levels
- An increased risk of certain cancers, including testicular and kidney cancer
- Birth defects
- Liver damage
- An elevated risk of thyroid disease
- And increased risk of asthma

Protecting Yourself

If you suspect something is wrong with your tap water, contact your public water utility immediately. You may also wish to have your household water tested. The EPA provides a [list of certified laboratories](#).

Red Flags That Your Water May Be Contaminated It Looks Funny

Your tap water should always be clear. If it looks cloudy or milky, set it down for a few minutes to see if

it clears up. If it does, your water might have just contained trapped air bubbles. If it stays cloudy or foamy, your water could contain elevated levels of heavy minerals or something worse. In that case, it's time to get your water tested.

It Smells Strange

If your water has an unusual smell, it could be contaminated, but oftentimes contaminants have no smell. A strong rotten egg smell can indicate that your water contains high levels of sulfur. This is usually not dangerous, but it can be unappetizing. Likewise, if your water tastes like a swimming pool, it may contain high levels of chlorine. A water filter may help eliminate excess chlorine and sulfur.

It Tastes Funny

Oftentimes, contaminants have no taste, but in some cases they might. In Flint, Michigan, residents said the water tasted strange, smelled bad and had a brownish color.

Your water may be contaminated if it looks, smells, or tastes funny.

According to a 2017 article in the journal Applied Water Science, most contaminants can't be easily detected and testing is needed to identify them.

If you have reason to believe your water supply is

contaminated, switch to using bottled water for cooking, drinking, brushing your teeth and making ice.

In some situations, boiling your water will make it safe to consume. If your water authority issues a boil water advisory, bring your water to a vigorous boil for one minute. This will ensure that all bacteria and other microbes are killed and will make the water safe for drinking, cooking and ice making.

Unfortunately, boiling water won't get rid of other types of contaminants and may even make the water worse. Boiling water that contains PFAS, for instance, will actually concentrate the chemicals and increase your health risks.

On a household basis, there are also a number of things you can do to [reduce the pollution of our water.](#)

You and your family can help keep our water supply safe by abiding by the following do's and don'ts.

- **DO Catch Runoff:** Use gravel, paver stones and other porous materials to stop the flow of storm water around your home before it pours into storm drains.

- **DO Pick Up After Your Dog:** Pet waste is laden with bacteria and can easily contaminate storm drains and water supplies. Pick up poop in a recycled bag and put it in your garbage.
- **DO Maintain Your Car:** When your car leaks oil, coolant and other fluids, rainwater takes it right into the groundwater. Keep your car in good condition and also wash it in a commercial car wash. It's better than discharging polluted water down your driveway.
- **DO Shop with Pollution in Mind.** Reducing your use of harmful chemicals can also go a long way. When possible, choose non-toxic cleaners and pesticides and opt for phosphate-free detergents.
- **DON'T Use the Toilet as a Trash Can.** Don't flush tampons, baby wipes and other non-biodegradable products. Also avoid flushing old prescription medications and take them to a prescription drug drop-off point instead.
- **DON'T Use the Sink as a Trash Can:** Never dump paint, oil or other household

chemicals down the drain. This also goes for fat, oil and cooking grease. Instead, keep it in a jar under the sink and dispose of the jar in the garbage when it gets full.

Finally, if you see someone pouring oil down a storm drain or dumping waste in a stream, report them to the authorities. You may first want to try contacting your local government, but if that doesn't work, you can contact your state environmental agency. The EPA also has an online form where you can report environmental violations.

CHAPTER SIX

SAFETY AT WORK PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Workplace Safety & Hazards: Types, Examples and Prevention Tips

Safety should never be an afterthought; especially in the workplace, as organizational efficiency directly depends on the well-being of employees. Hence, if you want to achieve higher productivity in the workplace, you must make workplace safety an integral part of any organizational culture.

In this post, you will learn about workplace safety, common workplace hazards and accidents, workplace safety strategies, and accident prevention tips. We will also show you how to monitor workplace safety using Formplus forms.

What is Workplace Safety?

Workplace safety refers to the limitation of elements that can cause harm, accidents, and other negative outcomes in the workplace. It represents a culmination of policies, behaviors, and precautions that work to limit hazards, accidents, and other kinds of harm in a work environment.

More often than not, workplace safety directly affects the productivity and well-being of your workforce, and these directly affect the quality of output of your business. Hence, employers must strive to create a safe environment that offers an acceptable level of risk for all employees.

Also, employees must be quick to identify situations and conditions in the workplace that can jeopardize their safety or expose them to unacceptable risk levels. In the United States of America, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) acts as the regulatory body for workplace safety.



7 Types of Workplace Hazards and How to Prevent them

1. Electrical Accident

Electrical accidents are very common in the workplace

and they are caused by unprotected exposure to high voltage electrical outlets. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, electrical hazards cause more than 300 deaths and 4,000 injuries in American workplaces every year.

Electrical burns, electrical fires, and electrical shocks are 3 major types of electrical accidents. Electrical shocks occur when bodily contact with electricity causes the current to run through your body and in severe cases, it can lead to heart or respiratory failures.

Many times, electrical burns are aftermaths of electrical shocks and they can be internal or external. Electrical fires occur when un-insulated wiring or broken circuits come in contact with flammable material in the workplace such as cotton and wood shavings.

When workers have to make use of faulty extension cords or work in environments littered with exposed power lines, they are directly at risk of electrical accidents. Such exposure can result in minor to major injuries especially burns, cardiac arrest, and even death (electrocution) in many cases.



Other scenarios that can result in electrical accidents include the following:

- Hidden electrical outlets in the workspace.
- Unsafe equipment or installation.
- Lack of personal protective equipment.
- Poor control of work activities
- Un-insulated electrical wiring
- Lack of training
- Failure to isolate circuits before working

Here are a few things to do when electrical accidents; especially shocks and burns, happen in the workplace.

- Avoid touching the victim with your hands.

- Do not remove any blisters or burnt flesh from the victim's body.
- Do not rub any ointment on the burns.

Workplace Safety Tips to Prevent Electrical Hazards

To protect your employees and prevent electrical shock accidents in the workplace, employers and employees must take extra care to practice workplace safety habits. Specifically, here are a few precautions you can take:

- Always inspect the working area for uninsulated wires, broken cord, and exposed electrical circuits beforehand.
- Do not make use of faulty electrical equipment at all times.
- Workers must wear personal protective equipment.
- Isolate electrical equipment before working on them.
- Have a prompt system for reporting and documenting electrical shock incidents in the workplace. You can make use of the Formplus Incident Report Form for noticing, reporting, and investigating electrical hazards.

2. **Exposure to Dangerous Chemicals**

Toxic chemicals in the workplace can also hamper the

safety of employees; especially when they are exposed to these substances without appropriate caution. Chemical exposure can result in a number of effects ranging from cancer and organ failures to death.

There are different toxic chemicals that employees may be exposed to as they complete daily tasks in the workplace. Usually, these chemicals are classified according to the type of harm that they can cause to the body as shown below:

Corrosives: These are chemicals that can cause irreversible bodily harm such as hydrochloric acid.

Irritants: Exposure to irritant chemicals can result in reversible inflammation of the contact skin area.

Examples of irritant chemicals include strong solvents.

Teratogens: This class of chemicals can cause birth defects when employees are exposed to them. A popular teratogen in the workplace is thalidomide.

Sensitizers: A sensitizer, such as an isocyanate, can trigger allergic reactions upon exposure.

Mutagens: Exposure to this type of chemical can lead to negative gene mutation and damage to the

chromosomes. A good example of this chemical is benzene.

Carcinogens: A carcinogen is a chemical that can trigger malignant growth in body cells; thereby potentially causing cancer. Asbestos is a common carcinogen.

Employees can be exposed to these chemicals through inhalation, direct or indirect skin contact, ingestion, and injection. Unlike other workplace accidents, the effects of chemical exposures are typically gradual and long-term and their impacts are far-reaching.



Workplace Safety Tips to Prevent Exposure to Dangerous Chemicals

- Wear personal protective equipment while handling chemicals in the workplace.
- Limit individual employees' exposure to chemicals by creating a work roaster.
- Monitor daily employee safety using the Formplus employee safety review form.

3. **Machinery & Tools Hazard**

Employees who work in industries that require the use of machinery and tools such as construction or transportation are at risk of machinery and tools accidents. A report by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration suggests that 12 of the 874 deaths in the construction industry in 2014 resulted from machinery and tools accidents.

In many cases, these accidents are caused by the use of faulty equipment, lack of adequate knowledge, product defects, or negligence of stipulated safety precautions. Common examples of workplace machinery and tools accidents are:

- A burn caused by a faulty heater in the factory.
- Falls from a defective ladder or shaky scaffolding.
- Cuts from broken tools or sharp tool

edges.

- Injuries caused by the use of the wrong tool.
- Hearing loss as a result of working in the factory without earmuffs.
- Lacerations or amputations as a result of the use of equipment without safety mechanisms.
- Crush injuries due to machine entanglement.

Workers who are victims of machinery and tools accidents are entitled to some sort of compensation that caters to medical bills and similar expenses. If the accident was caused by a defective product, such an employee may have a product liability claim against the manufacturer (s) of the equipment.



Workplaces Safety Tips to Prevent Machine and Tool Accidents

- Organizations must carry out frequent risk assessments.
- Tools and machinery should be maintained regularly and replaced when due.
- Use the Formplus incident report form to swiftly file reports of any machinery and tools to prevent accident.
- Appropriate protective equipment must be worn in the workplace.
- Employees must undergo training on how to make use of machinery and tools.
- Safety guards must be fitted into workplace equipment.

4. **Workplace Harassment**

Workplace harassment is a common problem that can result in an unhealthy working environment, reduced productivity, and toxic behaviors. It encompasses any actions that repeatedly threaten, abuse, ridicule, or discriminate against employee(s) and can have adverse effects on work performance.

Many times, such negative actions are targeted towards specific demography; thus, employees may suffer abuse and discrimination as a result of their social status, gender, race, or physical appearance.

Workplace harassment is also known as workplace aggression and it can take several forms including bullying, psychological abuse, and sexual assault.

Behaviors and actions that can be termed "harassing" in the workplace cut across body-shaming, offensive jokes, and slurs such as racist comments, intimidation, and physical assaults. The harasser does not have to be your boss or employer; it can be a co-worker or even someone who has other affiliations with the organization such as a client.

As a victim of workplace harassment, the first thing you may want to do is stand up for yourself and clearly communicate your disapproval of such behavior to your harasser. Also, utilize appropriate complaint channels to report cases of workplace harassment for redress.



How to Prevent Workplace Harassment

- Organizations must take extra care to create and implement anti-harassment policies.
- Educate staff on workplace harassment.
- Use the Formplus workplus harassment form for effective monitoring and reporting of workplace harassment.

5. Fire Accidents

A fire accident is a very serious danger that can result in loss of life and property in the workplace. A report by the Us Bureau of Statistics states that nearly 200 workers die from workplace fires and explosions every year, and more than 5,000 others sustain minor to major injuries.

The first step to preventing a fire outbreak in any organization is recognizing potential causes. Here is a list of some of the things you should look out for

Faulty Electrical Equipment: Electrical fire is one of the most common types of fire accidents in workplaces. An electrical fire can be sudden, widespread in a few minutes, difficult to contain, and very destructive.

Clutter: Untidy work environments can also result in fire outbreaks. When workspaces are littered with inflammable material and poorly ventilated, it is easy for fire accidents to happen.

Combustible Materials: Organisations that utilize combustible materials for production must take extra safety precautions when handling them. Failure to do this increases the risk of fire outbreaks.

Negligence: When employees fail to adhere to safety precautions, such negligence can result in fire accidents.

How to Prevent Workplace Fire Accidents

- Create numerous fire exits in the workplace. Fire exits should complement the size and composition of your building.
- Install fire alarms and extinguishing systems.
- Do not place inflammable materials near ignition sources like circuits and electrical outlets.
- Organize compulsory fire drills regularly.
- Promptly inform your employer about fire hazards using the Formplus incident report form.
- Do not overload power circuits.

6. **Workplace Theft**

Workplace theft occurs when an employee illegally obtains cash or non-cash properties from his or her organization. Many times, employees who engage in workplace theft see this as a means of settling scores with their employers or getting back at their employers for poor remuneration or other unfavorable working conditions.

In some other cases, employees feel that engaging in workplace theft will not affect the organization; especially when such action involves obtaining non-cash properties like office equipment, stationery, or office supplies. In other words, these persons view the organization as an anonymous entity that will not suffer significant hurt as a result of their “minor” actions.

As an employer, you may have been a victim of one or more of these types of workplace theft:

Billing: An employee may inflate the prices of goods and services or present fake invoices for payment.

Cash Larceny: This occurs when an employee diverts incoming payments for goods and services after such a transaction has been filled in the organization's books.

Payroll: Some employees can apply for compensation for work not done such as payments for false overtime.

Cash Theft: Cash theft is one of the most common types of workplace theft. It involves unlawful obtaining of cash held in the workplace such as stealing money from the company's safe.

Expense Reimbursement: When applying for reimbursement, some employees can inflate the actual costs incurred in order to claim more money.
How to Prevent Workplace Theft

Use the Formplus incident report form to report any cases of theft in your organization

A yellow incident report form with a title 'Incident Report Form' at the top. Below the title are three input fields: 'Name of reporter', 'Name of victim', and 'Address of victim'. Each field is represented by a white rectangular box on a yellow background.

Incident Report Form

Name of reporter

Name of victim

Address of victim

- Create and implement workplace anti-theft policies.
- Organize anti-theft workshops for employees.
- Limit the amount of cash on hand in the workplace.
- Always verify receipts and invoices before making payments.

7. Workers Existing Health Conditions

Workers with underlying health conditions are more susceptible to certain types of accidents in the workplace such as accidents resulting from chemical exposure. Employers must take care to accurately document the medical history of employees and also carry out medical examinations before employment.

It is also important for employers to provide conducive and safe working environments for workers as poor working conditions can aggravate pre-existing health conditions in employees. For instance, a worker who is asthmatic may have an attack if he or she is forced to work in an environment that has poor ventilation systems.

Workers with pre-existing health conditions should not be discriminated against; although this has hardly been the case. Many times, pre-existing health

conditions affect remuneration such that employees in this demography may earn.

Nevertheless, employees with any underlying illnesses should always inform their employers in order to get the best care even as they go about different tasks in the workplace. In addition, such persons must insist on extra safety measures at work.

How to Protect Workers with Underlying Illnesses in the Workplace

- Implement flexible working hours for workers with pre-existing health conditions.
- Limit the exposure of such employees to workplace hazards such as toxic chemicals.
- Observe additional safety precautions in the workplace.
- Use the Formplus employee complaint form to track and record any safety complaints made by employees.

How to Manage Workplace Accidents

- **Proper Orientation/Training**

Employees must be duly informed about workplace safety measures and trained on how to maintain

workplace safety at all times. As an employer, normalize organizing compulsory safety workshops and training that deal with different aspects of workplace safety for all stakeholders in your organization.

Safety training in the workplace should focus on familiarising employees with different workplace hazards and how to identify, report, and prevent them. Employees should undergo proper training before making use of any equipment in the workplace and they should also observe other safety precautions that can help to prevent accidents.

- **Have a Safety Policy Every Employee Must Follow**

In line with stipulated guidelines provided by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), your organization must draft and implement a compulsory workplace safety policy for all employees. Every employee must get acquainted with these safety guidelines and adhere to them at all times.

In your workplace safety policy, detail procedures for dealing with emergency situations such as fire outbreaks and workplace violence. Your organization's safety policy must be reviewed from time to time and every employee must have a copy of

this document for future references.

- **Incident Report**

Create an effective system for filing and processing reports on different types of workplace accidents. Employees should make it a point of duty to swiftly report any accidents in the workplace to the management for proper investigation and other necessary actions.

You can set up a manual system for incident reports using paper forms and verbal reporting channels or you can automate the process with the Formplus incident report form. With the Formplus incident report form, you can easily document any injuries, disasters, or accidents in the workplace.

- **Safety Team for Standards and Monitoring**

More than creating workplace safety policies, organizations must set up in-house regulatory teams that work to ensure adherence to these standard practices. This team can conduct regular safety surveys using the Formplus employee survey form to gather feedback on the effectiveness of safety precautions and other necessary information.

Safety is a state of Being



Conclusion

Employees have the right to be safe even as they carry out different tasks in every organization. Hence, every employer must prioritize workplace safety and look after employee protection in order to promote the well-being of all staff in the organization and sundry.

Ensuring safety in the workplace is everyone's responsibility as a breach of safety has dire consequences. Hence, employees must undergo proper orientation on workplace safety measures and tips while safety monitoring systems should be set up and monitored, accordingly.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN CHURCHES AND PLACES OF WORSHIP CLEANING

Cleaning activities are carried out regularly in church premises and it is important to consider the risks to

persons while cleaning and put adequate control measures in place. Cleaning will more than likely be carried out by members of the congregation and it is important that they are aware of any precautions that need to be taken when accessing areas for cleaning and using cleaning chemicals. If the church employs specific staff or cleaning contractors to carry out the task of cleaning then adequate controls must also be implemented for their safety also. Look at what cleaning activities are carried out. Can any of the cleaning activities be done in a safer manner for example, by using extending cleaning equipment rather than getting up at a height to light fittings etc? Look at precautions in place for preventing slips or trips when cleaning. For example wet floor signage, prompt cleaning of spillages and non-slip foot wear or flooring.

Hazardous cleaning chemicals should be replaced with less hazardous chemicals where possible. All chemicals should be kept in their original packaging and instructions for safe use adhered to. Persons carrying out cleaning should be briefed on cleaning activities to be carried out and instruction on the safe use of cleaning equipment and chemicals. If electrical equipment is used for cleaning such as vacuum cleaners and floor cleaners they must be maintained in a safe condition. Persons using such equipment should be advised on safe use and

procedures for reporting defects.

If using cleaning equipment outside such as power washers it must be ensured that they are appropriate for outdoor use. Where electrical equipment is used in wet conditions, then the mains supply point should be protected by a waterproof cover.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance can take many forms and involve working at height or using hazardous chemicals. It should never be approached lightly but carefully planned. It is important to remember safe maintenance saves time, saves money and saves lives.

These five basic rules for safe maintenance provide common principles applicable to all maintenance tasks:

1. **Planning:** Maintenance should start with proper planning and consultation with all appropriate persons. The task to be carried out must be clearly defined and how it will affect other persons and activities considered.
2. **Making the work area safe:** The work area should be secured to prevent unauthorised access, for example by use of barriers and signs.

Safe routes for both staff carrying out maintenance and other persons should be established.

3. **Using the appropriate equipment:** The right tools for the job must be provided, in appropriate condition and suitable for the work environment.
4. **Working as planned:** Works should be monitored so that agreed safe systems of work and site rules are observed.
5. **Final check:** When all work areas have been checked and declared safe, then the maintenance task is complete and normal operations can restart.

CONTRACTORS

Anyone entering your premises for the purpose of carrying out work, other than an employee or voluntary worker of the church/ parish, will be regarded as a contractor.

When engaging contractors, including the self-employed, the following should be considered: Request a copy of their health and safety policy (where required by law).

Request evidence that they have appropriate public and employer's liability insurance in place. A record of this evidence should be maintained.

Contractors must cooperate with church officials in providing a safe place of work and a safe system of operation. Where plant and machinery is brought onto the church premises by contractors, they must be able to show where necessary that the equipment has been inspected and tested to ensure its safe operation. Provide contractors with detailed instructions regarding the areas where they are permitted to work and the extent of the work they are authorised to undertake.

Risks can be reduced by using contractors that you are familiar with and have established arrangements for health and safety. Risk is also reduced by having regular communication with contractors on site, your own employees and members of the public who need to be informed about any additional control measures they need to follow in order to stay safe when contractors are on site.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Electricity is a familiar and necessary part of everyday life, but electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property.

All electrical equipment, including portable equipment and installations, should be maintained (so far as is reasonably practicable) to prevent danger.

Electrical Equipment

Electrical equipment should be visually checked at regular intervals to ensure that there are no loose connections, worn flexes or trailing leads and to spot early signs of damage or deterioration. Any repairs needed should be reported to the relevant person for action. It is good practice to maintain a list of all portable electrical appliances.

It is recommended that portable electrical equipment is tested by a competent person with an appropriate level of electrical knowledge and experience who has the correct equipment to complete the tests, know how to use it and can correctly interpret the results. Any unsafe equipment should be removed from use and disposed of in a safe manner.

Fixed Electrical Installation

It is recommended that the fixed electrical installation should be inspected at least once every five years or according to the recommendations of the competent person.

The electrical installation should be inspected by a person who has the competence to do so, such as an approved contractor from Electrical Contractors Association(ECA), National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC), or other similar approved organization.

Outdoor Electrical Equipment

Outdoor electrical equipment should be suitable for its intended environment. Appropriate protective devices should be in place.

Tips to ensure electrical safety visually check all electrical equipment before use.

- a. Report all faults immediately to the responsible person.
- b. Do not attempt to use or repair faulty equipment.
- c. No electrical equipment is to be brought onto the premises and used until it has been tested by the approved person.
- d. Electrical equipment should be switched off and disconnected when not in use for long periods.
- e. Flexible cables should be positioned and protected so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard and are not subject to mechanical damage.
- f. Adequate number of socket outlets should be

provided as overloading socket outlets by using adaptors can cause fire.

GAS SAFETY

All gas appliances, installation pipe work and flues must be maintained in a safe condition so as to prevent risk of injury to any person. Gas appliances must be inspected by a competent contractor who is registered with the Gas Safe Register. Any necessary work required for safety should be implemented immediately. All registered engineers will carry a Gas Safe Register ID card with their own unique license number. Before you have any gas work carried out, always ask to see the card. Check both sides of the card to make sure the engineer is qualified for the work you want doing and their qualifications are in date.

CARBON MONOXIDE

Unsafe gas appliances produce a highly poisonous gas called Carbon Monoxide(CO). It can cause death as well as serious long term health problems such as brain damage.

Carbon Monoxide has no taste, smell or colour. Gas Safe Register strongly recommends you fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm where there are gas

appliances present in the building. While an alarm will alert you to presence of Carbon Monoxide, it is no substitute for having an annual gas safety check and regular servicing by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

LIQUID PETROLEUM GAS (LPG)

LPG cylinders should be stored upright in an area which is properly constructed, adequately controlled and well ventilated i.e. outdoors. A cylinder that has held LPG though supposedly empty will still contain LPG vapour.

If the valve is left open air will diffuse into the cylinder and may form a dangerous and explosive mixture. Consequently an 'empty' LPG cylinder should always be stored under the same conditions as for 'full' LPG cylinders.

There should be no storage of LPG within 2 metres of a building opening e.g. door, window, air vent, gully. If a gully or drain is unavoidably within 2 metres of LPG storage the opening should be securely covered or fitted with a suitable water seal to prevent the entry of vapour.

LIGHTNING PROTECTION

A lightning strike to a church can be devastating. It is therefore important to ensure that adequate controls

are in place to:

- a. Protect the structure of the building;
- b. Protect people in the building and in the vicinity of the building; and
- c. Protect electrical equipment in the building or connected to the buildings supplies.

Advice should be sought from a competent person on the need for lightning protection, any associated works and suitable contractors.

Where installed, lightning protection should be subject to regular testing.

CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

Equipment used to maintain churchyards is usually more powerful than domestic equipment. All garden machinery should be inspected and serviced regularly and any defects remedied immediately. Appropriate safety equipment should be used where necessary. Training to use work equipment e.g. chainsaws, mowers, must be sufficient to ensure all relevant persons are competent in their use. Training depends on the task and to what extent an employee already has relevant knowledge and experience.

GRAVE DIGGING

Personnel involved in the activity of grave digging

should be made aware of the following precautions that should be taken to reduce the risk of injury. These guidelines are especially important as the operators may often work alone with machinery.

- a. Protective clothing including overalls and protective boots must be worn at all times. Protective helmets must be worn when working in conjunction with the excavator or in the excavation. Eye protectors should be worn when breaking hard material.
- b. All grave digging staff should receive training.
- c. All tools and equipment required to complete each grave opening must be available and nearby before commencing the excavation.
- d. All practicable steps must be taken to prevent damage and prevent burying or trapping in any depth of excavation. No soil, whatever its nature, can be relied upon to support its own weight for any length of time, let alone any additional loads which may be imposed by plant equipment and materials. Even a small fall of earth is capable of inflicting serious injury.

A second person should be in attendance whenever work is being carried out in an excavation of a depth greater than 3 feet (0.91m). When hand digging, shoring must be incorporated as digging proceeds below a depth of 3 feet (0.91m).

All non-hydraulic shoring equipment must be inspected on a regular basis(monthly). Hydraulic shoring equipment must be inspected weekly to ensure that rams are in good working condition.

Defective units must not be used

Lowering webbing and putlogs must be inspected prior to each burial to ensure that no deterioration has occurred and that they are capable of taking the weight of the coffin. Frayed webbing should be destroyed. Access to and from the excavation must be carried out by the use of a pole ladder. All spoil from the excavation must be placed at least 1m from the edge in order to minimize the risk of collapse. All edges of the grave must be protected by planks so that the weight of the persons and tools will be evenly distributed over as large an area as possible.

All excavations must be covered by boards or a grave cover (some manufacturers of mechanical shoring equipment provide a lockable cover to ensure complete security) when digging is not in process or left unattended, particularly overnight, as normal burial procedure dictates that the grave is excavated on the day previous to the burial taking place.

- e. All cuts and abrasions should be protected by a waterproof plaster. Hands and arms should be

washed thoroughly before preparing or ingesting any food or drink. All personnel employed in grave digging should be required to submit themselves for tetanus immunisation at the required levels.

5. ACCIDENTS

Accidents don't just happen, there is always a reason for them. The first step to preventing accidents is to carry out a risk assessment. The health and safety officer must be made aware of all accidents and near misses (an incident which had the potential to cause harm) so that you can identify the hazard and take the steps needed to prevent it from happening again. It is good practice to record in your accident book all details of accidents and near misses. However, you may need to report some of these to the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland as there is a legal requirement to report certain types of accidents for example where a person working on the church premises is killed or suffers a major injury, if a member of the public is taken to hospital, or if a worker suffers an injury preventing them from working or carrying out their normal duties for more than three days. Examples of major injury, over three day and occupational disease which require reporting include:

Major Injury Over three day injury Occupational Disease Broken bone (except fingers and toes) Dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine Loss of sight or serious injury to an eye, Loss of consciousness caused by electric shock, lack of oxygen or being exposed to a hazardous substance.

Amputation: This is an injury that results in the injured person being away from work or unable to do their normal work for more than three days (including weekends or other non-work days) such as strains and sprains. Hand arm vibration syndrome Occupational asthma Dermatitis is as kin disease which is caused by a person coming in contact with am hazardous substance Accident report forms are available on the

HSE website at <http://www.hseni.gov.uk/contact-us/report-anincident.htm>

Catering activities may be carried out in churches for specific events, clubs or occasions. In some cases, where “a certain continuity of activity” and “a certain degree of organization” can be shown, you will need to register as a food business under food hygiene legislation. It is important that anyone preparing and handling food has a good knowledge of food safety and training may be required to ensure this is met. The kitchen facilities provided must also be able to meet the requirements of food legislation. All food business operators must identify food safety

hazards and risks relevant to their business and put in place procedures to prevent problems. They are also required to provide simple written evidence of the arrangements for making sure the food produced and sold to customers is safe.

6. **FIRE SAFETY**

A fire risk assessment is an organized and methodical look at the premises for which you have responsibility, the activities carried on there and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises. Your fire risk assessment will allow you to make an informed decision on whether you have taken sufficient precautions or whether you need to do more to minimize the risk from fire.

The aims of a fire risk assessment:

- a. To identify hazards and to reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as is reasonably practicable; and
- b. To determine what fire safety measures and management policies are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the building should fire occur.

If you do not feel confident enough to undertake the fire risk assessment, for example, due to the complexity of the premises or the activities undertaken on them, you may wish to

commission a fire safety specialist to assist you. This person should have necessary qualifications and experience etc.

There are five steps in the risk assessment process:

Step 1 Identify fire hazards and risks associated with the premises, materials/substances, activities etc.

Step 2 Identify the people, or groups of people at risk and anyone who may be especially at risk for example those working alone or in isolated areas, children or parents with babies, the elderly or infirm and people with disabilities.

Step 3 Evaluate the risk and decide if existing fire safety measures are adequate.

Step 4 Record the significant findings of your fire risk assessment.

Step 5 Review your fire risk assessment as risk may change over time. If you make changes to your premises you should ensure that the assessment and risk management plan remain current.

CONCLUSION

God promised us safety in the lord Leviticus 25:18-19.

God makes us to dwell in safety Psalm 4:8,
Psalm 33:17

Safety is of the Lord. Proverb 21:31

Where there are counsellors, there is safety in
Proverb 11:14, Proverb 24:6.

WISE HEART AND HABITATION ORGANISATION

- ♦ Support the Education of the less privileged.
- ♦ Support environmental protection, conservation, control, climate change etc.
- ♦ Put smiles on the face of the less privileged.
- ♦ If you are blessed by the content of this book sow your seed to put copies into the hands of others.
- ♦ Make the heart of someone wise.
- ♦ Be wiser, save souls, win souls.
- ♦ Acc/Name – Wiseheart and Habitation Organisation
- ♦ Acc/No – 2033563633.
- ♦ Bank – First Bank of Nigeria.



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